WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A medical method for detecting and treating inadequate tissue perfusion of a patient, comprising:

providing a sensor for measuring an intravascular blood parameter;

positioning the sensor on a portion of the patient's vasculature;

measuring the intravascular parameter using the sensor;

detecting inadequate tissue perfusion based on the intravascular parameter measured by the sensor;

delivering a stimulus to increase tissue perfusion as a function of the measured intravascular parameter.

2. A medical method as in claim 1, wherein the sensor measures blood pressure, and wherein the sensor is positioned on a blood vessel.

3. A medical method as in claim 2, wherein the sensor includes a transducer and a catheter, wherein the catheter extends through a wall and inside a lumen of the blood vessel and the transducer resides outside the blood vessel.

4. A medical method as in claim 1, wherein the sensor measures blood flow rate, and wherein the sensor is positioned on a blood vessel.

5. A medical method as in claim 1, wherein the sensor is positioned on an artery.

6. A medical method as in claim 1, wherein the sensor is positioned on an vein.

7. A medical method for detecting and treating inadequate tissue perfusion of a patient, comprising:

providing a sensor for measuring intracardiac pressure;

positioning the sensor in or on the patient's heart;

measuring intracardiac pressure of the left side of the patient's heart using the sensor;

detecting inadequate tissue perfusion based on the intracardiac pressure measurement;

delivering a stimulus to increase tissue perfusion as a function of the intracardiac pressure measurement.

8. A medical method as in claim 7, wherein the measured intracardiac pressure comprises left atrial pressure.

9. A medical method as in claim 7, wherein the measured intracardiac pressure comprises left ventricular pressure.

10. A medical method as in claim 7, wherein the sensor is positioned on a chamber wall.

11. A medical method as in claim 10, wherein the chamber wall comprises a septal wall.

12. A medical method as in claim 10, wherein the chamber wall comprises a free wall.

13. A medical method as in claim 10, wherein the sensor includes a transducer and a catheter, wherein the catheter extends through the chamber wall into a cardiac chamber and the transducer resides outside the chamber.

14. A medical method as in claim 13, wherein the sensor is connected to a pacing electrode and the pacing electrode contacts the chamber wall.

15. A medical method for detecting and treating inadequate tissue perfusion of a patient, comprising:

providing a sensor for measuring tissue perfusion;

providing a therapeutic device for delivering a stimulus to increase tissue perfusion;

positioning the sensor in the patient remote from the therapeutic device;

measuring tissue perfusion using the sensor;

detecting inadequate tissue perfusion based on the tissue perfusion measurement; and

delivering a stimulus to increase tissue perfusion as a function of the tissue perfusion measurement.

16. A medical method as in claim 15, wherein the sensor is positioned adjacent vascularized tissue and measures blood flow in the vascularized tissue.

17. A medical method as in claim 16, wherein the sensor measures blood flow in capillaries in the vascularized tissue.

18. A medical method for treating a patient, comprising:

detecting heart rate as an indicator of inadequate tissue perfusion;

detecting at least one other indicia of inadequate tissue perfusion;

delivering a stimulus to increase tissue perfusion as a function of both heart rate and the at least one other indicia.

19. A medical method as in claim 18, further comprising providing a therapeutic device for delivering the stimulus to increase tissue perfusion.

20. A medical method as in claim 19, wherein the step of delivering the stimulus comprises delivering a stimulus to increase heart rate.

21. A medical method as in claim 20, wherein the step of providing a therapeutic device comprises providing a pacemaker, and wherein the step of delivering the stimulus to increase heart rate comprises delivering electrical impulses to the patient's heart.

22. A medical method as in claim 20, wherein the step of providing a therapeutic device comprises providing an infusion pump, and wherein the step of delivering the stimulus to increase heart rate comprises delivering a bolus of a drug.

23. A medical method as in claim 20, wherein the step of detecting at least one other indicia of inadequate tissue perfusion comprises detecting blood pressure.

24. A medical method as in claim 23, wherein the step of detecting blood pressure comprises detecting vascular blood pressure.

25. A medical method as in claim 23, wherein the step of detecting blood pressure comprises detecting intracardiac blood pressure.

26. A medical method as in claim 20, wherein the step of detecting at least one other indicia of inadequate tissue perfusion comprises detecting blood flow.

27. A medical method as in claim 26, wherein the step of detecting blood flow comprises detecting vascular blood flow.

28. A medical method as in claim 20, wherein the step of detecting at least one other indicia of inadequate tissue perfusion comprises detecting blood perfusion in tissue.

29. A medical method as in claim 28, wherein the step of detecting blood perfusion in tissue comprises detecting blood perfusion in tissue in the patient's upper body.

30. A medical method as in claim 28, wherein the step of detecting blood perfusion in tissue comprises detecting blood perfusion in tissue in the patient's chest.

31. A medical method as in claim 28, wherein the step of detecting blood perfusion in tissue comprises detecting blood perfusion in tissue in the patient's head or neck.

32. A medical method, comprising:

providing an implantable therapeutic device (ITD) configured to deliver a stimulus to increase heart rate;

providing an implantable pressure sensing device (PSD) including a hermetically sealed housing, a pressure transducer disposed in the housing, a pressure transmission catheter (PTC) having a proximal end, a distal end, and a lumen extending therethrough, with the proximal end of the PTC connected to the housing and the lumen of the PTC in fluid communication with the pressure transducer;

implanting the ITD in a patient;

implanting the PSD in the patient such that the distal end of the PTC resides in a vascular lumen and the housing remains outside the vascular lumen;

connecting the PSD to the ITD via an electrical lead; and

operating the ITD to deliver the stimulus to increase heart rate in response to a drop in blood pressure as measured by the PSD.

33. A method as in claim 32, wherein the pressure transducer of the PSD converts a pressure signal to an electrical signal, and wherein the ITD includes a signal processor which evaluates the electrical signal for hypotension.

34. A method as in claim 33, wherein the lumen of the PTC is filled with a fluid and a barrier is disposed in a distal end of the PTC lumen to contain the fluid while permitting pressure to be transferred therethrough.

35. A method as in claim 32, wherein the ITD delivers an electrical stimulus.

36. A method as in claim 32, wherein the ITD delivers a pharmacological stimulus.